

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in this application.

1–5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding:

(a) a peptide immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 proteins, comprising ~~an immunoreactive fragment~~ ~~an~~ an epitope of the VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 protein, encoded within the EBV open reading frames BFRF3 and BdRF1, respectively, or

(b) a functional variant of said peptide described in (a), wherein said variant is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV) VCA-p18 or VCA-p40 proteins.

7. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ ~~nucleotide sequence of~~ SEQ ID NO.: 1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.

8. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ ~~nucleotide sequence of~~ SEQ ID NO.:3 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein.

9. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to claim 6.

10-25. (Canceled).

26. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to Claim 7.

27. (Previously presented) A vector molecule comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to Claim 8.

28-31. (Canceled).

32. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes a peptide comprising at least 12 contiguous amino acids of an Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein and wherein said peptide ~~comprises~~ 12 contiguous amino acids comprise an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.

33. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes a peptide comprising at least 12 contiguous amino acids of an Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein and wherein said peptide ~~comprises~~ 12 contiguous amino acids comprise an epitope that is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p40 protein.

34. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence, comprising the ~~nucleic acid sequence as shown in~~ nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a subsequence thereof, wherein said subsequence encodes an Epstein-Barr Virus peptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 or SEQ ID NO:6 or a combination of both,

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wherein said peptide is immunochemically reactive with antibodies to the Epstein-Barr Virus VCA-p18 protein.